

Application Serial No.: 09/926,541  
Reply to Office Action dated April 15, 2003

**REMARKS**

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 15-18, 20, 21, 23, and 25-35 are presently active in this case, Claims 15-18, 20, 21, 23, and 25-26 having been amended, Claims 14, 19, 22, and 24 having been canceled, and Claims 27-35 having been added by way of the present Amendment.

In the outstanding Official Action, the drawings were objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The Applicant's submit that the amendments to the claims set forth herein render this rejection moot. Accordingly, the Applicants request the withdrawal of the objection to the drawings.

Claims 14-17 and 19-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over EP 489966. Claim 18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over EP 489966 in view of Bohler et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,732,294). For the reasons discussed below, the Applicants request the withdrawal of the obviousness rejections.

The Applicants submit that a *prima facie* case of obviousness cannot be established in the present case because the references, either taken singularly or in combination, do not teach or suggest all of the claim limitations. (See MPEP 2143.) For example, the EP 489966 reference does not disclose an industrial robot comprising a manipulator having an opening and a lid configured to be detachably fixed to an edge of the opening , where the lid has removable sections, as recited in new independent Claim 27. Similarly, the EP 489966 reference does not disclose a process for fastening in an industrial robot, where the process comprising the step of detachably fixing a lid to an edge of an opening of a manipulator, where the lid has removable sections, as recited in new independent Claim 28.

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The EP 489966 reference is cited in the Official Action for the teaching of a manipulator including a device for fastening a cable set (11-16) in an opening, where the device includes a lid (9) and a holder (8). The Applicants submit that Figures 4 and 5 of the EP 489966 reference clearly depict an element (9)(which is cited for the teaching of a lid) that does not include removable sections. Additionally, the EP 489966 reference does not appear to provide any motivation to modify element (9) to include such a feature.

The specification of the present application describes a non-limiting embodiment that includes a lid (12) that can be divided into sections by removing/breaking off pieces along the directions (15) making the shape of the lid compatible with the holder or holders (9) fastened to the opening. The holder (9) and the lid (12) are, when arranged next to each other, shaped to form a tight overlap, thus effectively sealing the opening and prevent dirt or other debris from entering the opening. (See, e.g., page 5, lines 9-22, of the specification.) The EP 489966 does not provide any such teaching.

Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the obviousness rejection.

Claims 15-18, 20, 21, and 23 are considered allowable for the reasons advanced for Claim 27 from which they depend. These claims are further considered allowable as they recite other features of the invention that are neither disclosed, taught, nor suggested by the applied references when those features are considered within the context of Claim 27.

Claims 25 and 26 are considered allowable for the reasons advanced for Claim 28 from which they depend. These claims are further considered allowable as they recite other features of the invention that are neither disclosed, taught, nor suggested by the applied references when those features are considered within the context of Claim 28.

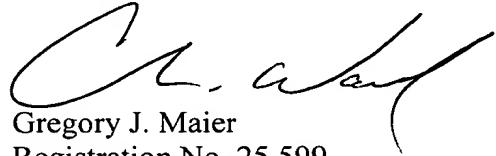
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Newly added Claims 29-35 are considered allowable as they recite features of the invention that are neither disclosed nor suggested by the references of record. For example, the cited references do not disclose or suggest an industrial robot comprising, among other features, a manipulator having an opening and a holder provided within the opening, where the holder has a collar with a U-shaped cross section that detachably connects to a section of an edge of the opening, as recited in Claim 29. (See Figures 2 and 3 of the present application for support.)

Consequently, in view of the above discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

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